



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

BIBLICAL STUDIES.

I.

THE USE OF THE HEBREW WORD נִצַּח.

THAT learning may be an encumbrance is a dangerous truth to utter. But a truth it most certainly is, and nowhere is its application more necessary than in lexicography. Schultens (*Proverbia Salomonis*, 1748, pp. 268 f.) is certainly not deficient in learning, but his discussion has the radical defect of being based on the Massoretic text. Now before learnedly determining the root-meaning of נִצַּח, we ought carefully to investigate the alleged occurrences of the word. I will venture to make a contribution to this, feeling sure that no careful student of the Old Testament at the present day will undervalue the importance of the effort. My readers will remember with interest that one of Robertson-Smith's last works was "Notes on Hebrew Words, I" (JEWISH QUARTERLY REVIEW, 1892, pp. 289 ff.); this lamented scholar intended to pursue the subject further, but illness prevented this. The passages on which I shall offer some, for the most part, fresh suggestions are these: 1 Sam. xv. 29, Hab. i. 4, Job xxxiv. 36, Prov. xxi. 28, Sirach xliii. 5, 13, and by way of appendix, Ps. lxviii. 24.

(a) 1 Sam. xv. 29, וְגַם נִצַּח יִשְׂרָאֵל, R. V. "And also the strength of Israel (or victory, or glory)." The latest commentator (Löhr) pays Dr. Driver the compliment of referring solely to him and to Wellhausen; indeed, he takes his statement of fact avowedly from Dr. Driver. But the work, so much valued by students, to which he refers,

was published in 1890, while Wellhausen's book appeared as long ago as 1871. Could nothing have been added by a scholar like Löhr? The true reading, it appears to me, is as plain as possible to a critic who respects but does not venerate the Massoretic text. All commentators have noticed the parallelism of Num. xxiii. 19. With this in our mind, and the recollection of the numerous passages in which duplicate readings have been combined in our text, we can hardly fail to restore the original text somewhat as follows, adopting the יָשׁוּב (*ἀποστρέψει*) of LXX in preference to the יִשְׁקֶר of MT.: לֹא אִישׁ יָשׁוּב [אִם] תִּשְׁקֶר יָשׁוּב. “And even if thou shouldst turn, God is not a man that he should turn; he is not a man that he should change his mind.” This is in general accordance with the view of the passage taken by the Targum. So the “strength (or glory, or confidence, or victory, or truth) of Israel” ceases to rank among the authenticated titles of the God of Israel. I have intentionally not discussed the LXX rendering, because it would not help us towards our goal.

(b) Hab. i. 4, וְלֹא יֵצֵא לְנֶצַח מִשְׁפָּט, A. V. and R. V. “and judgment doth never go forth”; R. V. marg., “. . . goeth not forth unto victory”; Dr. G. A. Smith, “. . . never gets forth” (or, colloquially, “never gets away”); Ewald, following the Syriac, “. . . comes not forth according to truth.” Clearly לְנֶצַח “for ever” is unnatural. Ewald has caught the true meaning, but there is no other passage in which נֶצַח can plausibly be said to mean “truth.” It is more than probable that we should read לְנִכְחָה “according to rightness” (cf. Isa. lix. 14, where אֱמֶת “truth” and נִכְחָה “straightforwardness” are parallel). Our study of Job xxxiv. 36 will confirm this.

(c) Job xxxiv. 36, אֶבִּי יִבְחֵן אֵיב עַד-נֶצַח, R. V. “Would that Job were tried unto the end.” For אֶבִּי Perles (*Analekten*, p. 58) rightly reads אִם (cf. Ps. cxxxix. 19); כִּי might easily be confounded with בִּי (final forms slowly established

themselves). But when Perles renders, "Oh that Job might permanently stand the test," we can hardly assent to it, because permanence has nothing to do with the matter. Right speaking is the subject of the section. Job, says Elihu, has not spoken wisely. For נָצַח we should certainly read נִבְחָה or נִבְחִית. The verb יִבְחֵן also needs correction. The LXX (μάθε) presupposes, not הִוָּהֵר (Duhm), but יִלְמַד; read יִלְמַד. The עַד before נָצַח in MT. is a corruption of מַד; i.e. the text originally contained, side by side, the wrong reading יִבְחֵן, and the right reading יִלְמַד. The sense is, "Oh that Job would learn rightness (in thought and speech)"; cf. Isa. xxvi. 10.

(d) Prov. xxi. 28, וְאִישׁ שִׁמְעַ לְנִצָּח יִדְבֵּר, R. V. "But the man that heareth shall speak unchallenged (or, so as to endure)." Can לְנִצָּח possibly mean "unchallenged"? Surely the only right rendering is, "shall speak continuously." But this is no sense at all; the antithesis in the parallel line is "shall perish." Grätz pronounces the passage unintelligible; Frankenberg leaves it untranslated. Surely the right reading is not far to seek. The LXX has ἀνῆρ δὲ φυλασσόμενος = וְאִישׁ נִשְׁמָר, and for לְנִצָּח we should certainly read לְנִבְחָה (cf. on Hab. i. 4). The sense is, "but a prudent man speaks according to that which is right."

(e) Lam. iii. 18, אָבַד נִצָּחִי, R. V. "my strength is perished" (so Löhr); "my victory," Driver, Budde, following LXX. The former sense is more suitable to the parallel line than the latter, but is not perfect, and has no philological basis. We might, of course, correct הִקֵּנִי (?), but the true reading is probably חֲסִדִּי "his lovingkindness" (cf. Ps. lxxvii. 9).

(f) Sirach xliii. 5, 13, וּדְבָרָיו יִנְצָח אֲבִירָיו; Lévi, "et sa parole assure la victoire à ses ministres"; Oxford editors, "and (with) his words he maketh brilliant(?) his mighty ones." [במשפט]; וְתִנְצָח זִיקָתוֹ; Lévi, "et fait triompher ses flammèches quand il châtie"; Oxford editors, "and maketh brilliant the flashes in judgment." The text is plainly corrupt; the scribe himself was uncertain as to the verb (see marginal readings). In the former passage יִרְיָן, in the latter

הָרִיץ, appears to be favoured by LXX (κατέσπενσεν—ταχύσει). At any rate, we cannot safely admit נָצַח into a glossary of the language of Sirach.

(g) Ps. lxviii. 24. This passage may partly compensate us for the loss of some supposed occurrences of נָצַח. The words to be corrected are מַאֲכֵיכִים מִנִּיהִי, R.V. "(that the tongue of thy dogs may have) its portion from [thine] enemies." It is common to read מִנִּיהִי from an unused substantive מֵן "part," or else מִנְתֹּהוּ. But the evil lies deeper. מַאֲכֵיכִים is also wrong. Comparing Isa. lxiii. 3, 6 and יִלְשֹׁן בְּלִבֶּיךָ הָאֵדָם מִנְצָח "and that the tongue of thy dogs may be reddened with vital sap."

These results are not the product of arbitrary guessing, but are in accordance with principles such as all practised correctors of the text constantly apply. I am afraid that, as in the case of בָּצַר (*Expository Times*, November, 1898), I have not had the support of any of the recent lexicons. But we are in a transitional stage. As Professor Kautzsch some years ago truly said, in a survey of the present state of the study of theology, a large amount of reconstruction is necessary. No good work can fail to help forward the desired end; in spite of ourselves, we are all radical reformers. Kuenen was by nature and temperament a conservative; circumstances and obedience to conscience made him a reformer. Our grammars and lexicons will but slowly adopt new critical results; but they cannot fail to do so, sooner or later, when these results have been tested and assimilated by a sufficient number of scholars. We shall yet understand the Old Testament Scriptures much better than we do at present.

II.

THE TEXT OF CANT. VII. 3, 5-7.

CANT. vii. 3, אֵין הַפֶּהֶר. I do not venture to follow Budde in supposing that סֶהַר "moon" (cf. Aram. סִיְהֶרָא) was in use when Canticles was written (Gunkel's סֶהַר, Ps. lxxiv. 16, is not happy). Nor is "moon-shaped basin" a very attractive phrase. Read probably כְּנוֹר (כְּנוֹרִי) אֵין "a chalice of pure gold" (cf. Job xxviii. 15).

Cant. vii. 5. The comparison of the bride's neck to an "ivory tower," and that of her nose to another tower (called the tower of Lebanon), are very odd. Indeed, though Siegfried, in the new *Handkommentar*, would render ver. 5 a, "Thy neck is like an ivory tower," Delitzsch's arguments against taking the article in הָשֵׁן as that of class or species, have lost none of their force. But Delitzsch's own view of a building panelled with ivory externally, and therefore conspicuous in sunshine, is improbable. Winckler (*Altor. Forsch.*, I, 293 f.) suggests correcting הָשֵׁן into הַשְּׁנִיר. But שְׁנִיר is not found with the article. More probably we should read שְׁנִיר; ה and ר are pretty frequently confounded, and transposition of letters is common. But the comparison ought to occupy two lines: where, then, is the second? Bickell (in an unpublished work, seen by Budde) would supply מְצֻפָּה הַבְּנִים "overlaid with ebony." This of course presupposes the improbable reading הָשֵׁן, and, I must say, it hardly improves the case for the correctness of that reading. We must look to the end of the verse, where the bride's nose is compared to "the tower of Lebanon which looks towards Damascus." Now צוֹפָה פְּנֵי רֶמְשָׁן is just what we want. The "tower of Lebanon" is a double of the "tower of Senir." The comparison of the neck to the mountain watch-tower is right; the comparison of the nose to it is wrong. But the scribe who in error

fitted the tower to the nose rendered us this service, that he preserved the second part of the description of the tower. Something more will be said on the scribe's error later on. Render, therefore,

"Thy neck is like the tower of Senir
Which looks toward Damascus."

The "pools in Heshbon by the gate of Bath-rabbim" come next. Bath-rabbim is stated in the new Hebrew Lexicon (BDB) to be "an appellation of the populous city of Heshbon, or of its gate" (LXX gives *θυγατὶς πολλῶν*). To the pools in or near Heshbon, and by the gate "of Bath-rabbim," the eyes of the bride are compared. And, conveniently enough, some old reservoirs have been found west of Heshbon, as Colonel Conder, in Hastings' *Bible Dictionary*, sets forth. But can we believe either that Heshbon was called "daughter of multitudes" (so BDB), or that these reservoirs were as famous in popular poetry as Carmel and Lebanon? Winckler offers a suggestion, but it does not help us—"Helbon" for "Heshbon." Pools of Helbon are not heard of elsewhere. Nor need we seek for a place near Lebanon or Hermon, for Carmel comes just afterwards; the "tower of Lebanon" is not really a fresh object of comparison. Surely what we want is "pools of Solomon." For בְּהֶשְׁבֹן we must certainly read שְׁלֹמֹה. I know this is a considerable alteration. But the immediate context (in ver. 6) has undergone much corruption; this alters the case. The test of this theory will be whether it will enable us to explain Bath-rabbim. For the "pools of *x*" are said to lie "by the gate of Bath-rabbim." And the theory stands the test imposed. Bath-rabbim is probably a corruption of Beth-hac-cerem, בֵּית־הַצֶּרֶם. The Beth-hac-cerem of Jer. vi. 1, according to some, is the so-called Frank Mountain; more probably it corresponds to the modern village of 'Ain Kârim, a little to the south-west of Jerusalem, near which is the beautiful St. Mary's Well, much visited by pilgrims. But we know nothing of ancient reservoirs here. It seems to me in the highest degree probable that

the three famous Pools of Solomon are meant, and that near these Pools was a place called Beth-haccerem ("place of vineyards"). Josephus (*Ant.*, VIII, 7, 3) reports that Solomon had "paradises" at Etham, irrigated from springs; and we cannot help connecting this with the statement of a late writer in Eccles. ii. 5, 6, that Solomon "made for himself gardens and parks . . . and pools of water, to water therefrom the forest (עַר) where trees were reared." Stanley and Delitzsch have already pointed out that the imagery of Cant. vi. 11, 12, seems to be suggested by the parks and orchards of Etam (see *Sinai and Palestine*, pp. 165 f.). And if we accept Winckler's emendation, עַר for עֶרֶב, in Cant. vii. 5, we arrive at a perfectly satisfactory view of the poet's description of the bride's eyes. Render—

"Thine eyes are like Solomon's pools
By the wood of Beth-haccerem."

The next comparison, according to the received text, is

"Thy nose is like the tower of Lebanon
Which looks towards Damascus."

But, as we have seen, the image here given belongs rather to an earlier couplet. It is the neck, not the nose, which is compared to the tower of Lebanon, or rather Senir; a scribe, in error, fitted the image of the tower to two different parts of the bride's beautiful body. We have now to ask, How came he to do so? To answer this question we must recall attention to a too much forgotten remark of Rashi, already quoted by Grätz. He says, "I cannot explain נֶחָם as nose, either literally or allegorically. For what beauty is there in a nose great and erect like a tower? I think rather that נֶחָם means face (פָּנִים)." Grätz agrees with this; so does the present writer. But can a face be likened to a tower? Surely not. But though the word "tower" is out of place in this connexion, "Lebanon" is not so. In ver. 15 (the eulogy on the bridegroom) we read,—

"His aspect is like Lebanon,
Choice, like the cedars."

Something like this may have stood in the eulogy on the bride. It would prepare the way for the next comparison. Here I may almost content myself with referring to a note in the JEWISH QUARTERLY REVIEW, January, 1899, pp. 237 f. Suffice it to add that vii. 7 is, in my opinion, to be read *בְּנֵי תַעֲנִינִיָּה*; cf. Micah i. 16, *בְּנֵי תַעֲנִינִיָּה*, and ii. 9, *בְּנֵי תַעֲנִינִיָּה* (so here Wellhausen), *בֵּת תַעֲנִינִים* would also do. And this, of course, suggests the most probable reading of vi. 12 and vii. 2. Perles (*Analekten*, p. 22) has rightly seen that these three passages should be grouped, though I am not myself satisfied with his correction of the text. See "Has Amminadib in Canticles any existence?" an article in the *Expositor*, February, 1899, pp. 145-147. I trust there to have helped Bickell to abolish "the chariots of my princely people," and to have aided Budde in his war against the extraordinary romance built on these words.

T. K. CHEYNE.